Leading Through Communications
Year-Round and When Facing a Strike

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Introductions & Background

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The Landscape Post-McCleary

Education | Local News | Local Politics

The fight to fund the schools was supposedly won. So why are they now slashing librarians?

April 17, 2019 at 6:00 am | Updated April 17, 2019 at 4:38 pm

The McCleary case is over, mission accomplished. The Seattle schools budget went from $752 million in 2017 to $989 million in 2019, a 31% boost.

Yet still we can’t afford librarians?

Editorial: McCleary fix needs fixing

By DAILY RECORD EDITORIAL BOARD | Aug 23, 2018

It was not all that long ago that there was a sense of relief, if not jubilation, that the state Legislature had finally resolved the long-standing challenge of complying with the state Supreme Court’s McCleary ruling to fully fund K-12 education.

Depending on the school district in which you live, the implementation of McCleary is encountering some bumpy roads.
The Landscape Post-McCleary

• Highly-charged environment

• Active use of social media = multiple channels of communication for EVERYONE

• Need for continuous communication and engagement – 24/7/365
Communications Around the Clock

• If you don’t tell your story, someone else will.
  • Internal and external audiences
  • Consistent, high-level messages
  • Point to website for details

• Build capital:
  • Share your good news: student success, interesting programs, etc.
  • Be honest and responsive when information is unfavorable.
Year-round Comms Builds “Capital”

• Start internally, move externally.

• District fiscal status; Levies/Bonds: Be visible. Don’t just “show up when you need money.”

• Bargaining communications: Talk regularly, not just when it gets hard.
Bargaining Communications

• **Tip:** Focus on the process; describe it in clear, neutral terms

• **Regularly remind people** where we are in the longer processes:
  • Whole process overview.
  • What has already been done? What's happening now?
  • What values guide decisions? Opportunities for input?
  • What's next?
  • Rinse and repeat... and repeat... and repeat...
Budget Process And Timeline 2019

**November 2018 – Summer 2019** (ongoing)
Regular budget updates via website, email and newsletters. Keep students, staff, families and community informed regarding Legislative updates and budget development process.

**January – February 2019**
Issue call for above-baseline requests (what is not currently funded) and budget reduction proposals. Principals and district leaders work with staff and school communities to determine priorities and make recommendations to the Department of Teaching and Learning and Finance and Operations.

**Early March 2019**
Gather Feedback on 2018 Priorities for Progress and draft budget priorities through an online survey. Superintendent shares and gathers feedback and ideas from all staff and families to help form draft budget.
Table of Contents

Using Desired Outcomes of The Bellingham Promise and Priorities for Progress to Make Budget Decisions

The Bellingham Promise ........................................... 2
Philosophy and Criteria Used in Budget Decisions .................. 4
Contingency Plan for Budget Reductions ............................ 4

Budget Decision-Making Process

Process Flow Chart .................................................. 5
Above Baseline Requests ........................................... 6
Allocation of Reserves .............................................. 6
Bond and Levy Funds ............................................. 6
Budget Presentations .............................................. 6
Social Media Strategies

• You CANNOT ignore social media.
  • As important as traditional media relations.
• Don't stop communicating during a crisis.
• Be responsive – and tone matters.
• Enlist the help of someone with social media savvy.
  • ESD communications support
  • Point person to monitor other channels?
Social Media Examples

Olympia School District

Welcome to our Facebook Live Budget Message Forum Q&A with Superintendent Patrick Murphy and Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Pushee. Please feel free to submit questions via the comment section and we will do our best to get them answered during this session! 

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Capital Region EFT 115 Washington Association of School Administrators Washington State School Directors Association ThurstonTalk.com The Olympian

Washougal School District

We are excited to offer the biggest raise Washougal teachers have ever received, and that will bring our salary into competition with regional districts. We believe this is a fair, equitable and regionally competitive offer. We believe our proposal supports our well-deserving teachers and is something the Washougal community can sustain over time, using ALL of the state provided funding for teachers, funds from the levy, and $2.4 million in reserves over the next four years.
The good news is that 3 local districts have agreements. The bad news is several do not. Battle Ground has been given notice that we do not have school tomorrow.

I went to the Battle Ground School District website in an attempt to find the latest “ask” from BGEA (Teacher’s Union). I found it. It’s a terrible document, making it look like there is a $10 deficit in year one. My friends, that is actually a $10 million deficit. Why is information being given to you in a way that does not make sense?

That should be a HUGE red flag.

Remember, the BG School District proposal puts them in a $16.9 million deficit spend over the next four years. With just $5.8 million in spendable reserves, this is not sustainable without new revenue sources or significant budget cuts.

According to the most recent information I can find, the BGEA proposal puts the district at a $70 million deficit spending situation over the next 4 years. Yes, that’s right. You will see that my number matches theirs, only now you can see it in real dollars and not in tens of dollars.

I also added a new number: the deficit as a percent of support services. The teachers should understand that without significant and massive new revenue sources, support services will have to be cut in the range of 27 to 58% over the next four years.

With the administrator salaries being just 3% of the total budget, you are talking massive layoffs to food services, building maintenance, finance, and other departments. And what about all the other costs to run a school? Utilities, toilet paper, copy paper, website and IT services, etc.

Do you who support the BGEA understand this? And if so, what is your
What to Do Now (this Spring)

• **Talk with your community about the legislative session:**
  • What were you expecting/hoping for?
  • What actually happened?
  • What are the big impacts on your school district?
  • Where are you in your budget development process?
  • Big ideas (growing/shrinking? Expected program changes, etc.)
  • What were/are the opportunities for internal/external input?
  • What’s next? – Through the school year and over the summer

• **Make sure your website is up to date**
  • Accurate information about budget development and bargaining process

• **Continue to share the positive:** social and traditional media
How to Layer Your Communications:

- Plan: Outline key messages and audiences
- Superintendent’s Messages
- District Website
- Outreach to families/email or text messages
- Social Media
- School Newsletter

Each channel reinforces the key messages in the Superintendent’s Message and points people to resources for additional information.
What Should Your Website Include?

• Superintendent’s message
• Basic information about bargaining
• A list of the associations within your district and details on each group
• A visible placeholder for routine updates
• Current contact information (OK to set up an email just for questions, but check regularly)
• Create a page that is not live ahead of time
Labor Relations

Welcome to Hockinson School District’s Labor Relations page. Our goal is to use this page to keep our community informed about the district’s collective bargaining with district employees who are represented by labor unions.

We will be adding to this page to keep our community informed as this process proceeds.

If you have additional questions, please email districtcommunication@hocksd.org. We will respond as soon as we are able, but please understand we are all working hard to complete these negotiations and prepare for the start of the 2018-19 school year.

Labor Relations Updates

Update -- Aug. 16, 2018 -- status summary

Update -- Aug. 17, 2018 -- includes HSD’s budgeted revenues, compensation requests from HEA and HESP, and proposals from HSD

Update -- Aug. 20, 2018 -- Q & A addressing questions regarding HSD’s budget, state funding and labor negotiations

Update -- Aug. 21, 2018 -- Update regarding mediation
Here are some key points to know as Evergreen Public Schools open on Monday, September 10 for the first day of class, following eight days of work stoppage:

Bus schedules are found on the website: http://evergreenps.org/Bus-Schedules;

Food Service will be open at all schools. Add money to a student account at: https://wa-evergreen.intouchreceipting.com;

All schools and all grades will report at normal times; EXCEPT FOR, Kindergarteners and Legacy High School;

Legacy High School will begin on Thursday. HRTs will contact students;

Kindergarten Smart Start (staggered start for students to ensure adequate time for state-mandated teacher/parent conferences) is still happening during this first week. Information will be provided, or parents can call school directly;

All Pre-Kindergarten programs remain on the same schedule;

Southwest Washington Childcare Consortium will return to normal school year programming at all elementary schools;

Home Choice Academy will begin on-site learning later this week;

Wednesday, September 12 will be elementary early release (as per usual Wednesday schedule); and

A new school calendar with make-up dates, will be released shortly.
VPS teachers approve contract; school starts Sept. 5

The new contract with VEA includes 31 early release days for the school year.

September 4th, 2018 | Categories: Contract negotiations

Pop-up food pantries scheduled Sept. 4-7 for VPS students and families | Español | Русский

Available food items will include snacks, breakfast items, bread and bagels, lunch items, fresh produce and more.

September 4th, 2018 | Categories: Family-Community Resource Center

Vancouver Public Schools and Vancouver Education Association tentatively agree on a new contract

Vancouver Public Schools and Vancouver Education Association today reached a tentative agreement on a new contract for teachers, counselors and other education professionals in the district. Schools are expected to open on Wednesday, Sept. 5, [...] 

September 2nd, 2018 | Categories: Contract negotiations

Vancouver Public Schools presents Sept. 1 teacher compensation proposal
If A Work Stoppage is Possible…

- **Reach out to WASA, WSSDA, and AWSP**
  - Expertise and support
  - On-site training
  - Online resources and materials

- **Plan ahead**
  - How and when will you communicate?
  - What will you say and when?
  - ID a spokesperson
Resources

- **WASA Bargaining Manual**
  - New section on year-round communications
    - Calendar of budget, bargaining-related prompts
  - Updated school board chapter with greater clarity of school board’s role
  - New samples section feat. examples of successful messaging in the current environment

- **ESD communication departments**
Thank you for your time

Questions?
Regional Workshops

• May 14 - ESD 113 (Olympia)
• May 20 – ESD 101 (Spokane)
• May 29 – ESD 105 (Yakima)
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